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Sustainable development: implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Mr. Abdulmalik **Alshabibi** (Yemen)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 52 (see A/60/488, para. 2). Action on sub-item (g) was taken at the 31st and 37th to 39th meetings, on 16 November and 15, 16 and 19 December 2005. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/60/SR.31 and 37-39).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.34 and amendments contained in A/C.2/60/L.65 and A/C.2/60/L.74

2. At the 31st meeting, on 16 November, the representative of Jamaica, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "International Year of Deserts and Desertification, 2006" (A/C.2/60/L.34), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 58/211 of 23 December 2003, in which it declared 2006 the International Year of Deserts and Desertification,

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in nine parts, under the symbol A/60/488 and Add.1-8.

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"*Taking note* of the decision of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, held in Nairobi from 17 to 28 October 2005, on the celebration of the 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification,

"*Deeply concerned* by the exacerbation of desertification in all regions of the world, particularly in Africa, and its far-reaching implications for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular on poverty eradication,

"*Aware* of the unique opportunity offered by the International Year of Deserts and Desertification to raise public awareness on the issue of desertification and to protect the biological diversity of deserts as well as the traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities affected by desertification,

"*Welcoming* the decision of the Government of Algeria to host a world summit dedicated to the 'Protection of deserts and combating desertification' in October 2006,

"*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of preparation of the International Year of Deserts and Desertification, 2006,

"1. *Welcomes* the nomination of United Nations honorary spokespersons for the International Year of Deserts and Desertification, and encourages the Secretary-General to nominate additional personalities in that respect so as to promote a successful celebration of the Year worldwide;

"2. *Reiterates* its call to Member States and all relevant international organizations to support the activities related to desertification, including land degradation, to be organized by affected countries, in particular African countries and the least developed countries;

"3. *Also reiterates* its call to countries to contribute, as they are able, to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and to undertake special initiatives in observance of the Year with the goal of enhancing the implementation of the Convention;

"4. *Calls upon* Member States to make voluntary contributions to the Special Fund of the Convention in order to achieve the objectives of resolution 58/211 entitled 'International Year of Deserts and Desertification 2006';

"5. *Invites* Governments and all relevant stakeholders that have not yet done so to inform the secretariat for the Convention of activities envisaged for the observance of the Year;

"6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to make available to the Parties to the Convention and to observers a consolidated list of all activities reported, including lessons learned and best practices, in order to coordinate information and avoid overlapping of activities;

"7. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to support, within its mandate, activities undertaken by affected developing countries parties to the Convention in the framework of the Year;

"8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the celebration of the Year."

3. At its 38th meeting, on 16 December, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications (see A/C.2/60/SR.38).

4. Also at the 38th meeting, the representative of Israel introduced an amendment (A/C.2/60/L.65) to the draft resolution, by which the following paragraph would be inserted after the fifth preambular paragraph:

"*Welcoming also* the decision of the Government of Israel to host, in cooperation with other stakeholders, an international conference entitled 'Deserts and Desertification: Challenges and Opportunities' in Be'er Sheva, Israel, in November 2006"

5. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the amendment by a recorded vote of 83 to 34, with 30 abstentions. The voting was as follows:[1]

In favour:

Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Comoros, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

[1] The representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic subsequently indicated that its delegation had not meant to vote on the amendment.

Abstaining:

Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Mali, Nicaragua, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

6. A statement in explanation of vote was made before the vote by the representative of Mauritania, on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

7. Statements in explanation of vote were made after the vote by the representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union), South Africa and Indonesia (see A/C.2/60/SR.38).

8. Also at the 38th meeting, the representative of Mauritania, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, introduced an amendment (A/C.2/60/L.74) to the draft resolution, by which the following paragraph would be inserted after the third preambular paragraph:

> "*Deeply concerned also* at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of agricultural land and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the uprooting of a vast number of fruit-bearing trees"

9. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the amendment by a recorded vote of 48 to 29, with 74 abstentions. The voting was as follows:[2]

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Comoros, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Suriname, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Finland, France, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-

[2] The representative of Papua New Guinea subsequently indicated that his delegation intended to vote against the amendment.

Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

10. A statement in explanation of vote was made before the vote by the representative of Israel.

11. Statements in explanation of vote were made after the vote by the representatives of India and Uruguay (see A/C.2/60/SR.38).

12. Also at the 38th meeting, the representative of Italy introduced a set of oral amendments to the draft resolution, by which:

(a) The fourth preambular paragraph, reading:

"*Aware* of the unique opportunity offered by the International Year of Deserts and Desertification to raise public awareness on the issue of desertification and to protect the biological diversity of deserts as well as the traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities affected by desertification"

would be replaced by the following paragraph:

"*Conscious* of the need to raise public awareness and to protect the biological diversity of deserts as well as indigenous and local communities and the traditional knowledge of those affected by this phenomenon";

(b) The fifth preambular paragraph, reading:

"*Welcoming* the decision of the Government of Algeria to host a world summit dedicated to the 'Protection of deserts and combating desertification' in October 2006"

would be replaced by the following paragraph:

"*Welcoming* the decision of the Government of Algeria to convene and host an international conference with the participation of Heads of State and Government dedicated to the 'Protection of deserts and combating desertification' in October 2006";

(c) In operative paragraph 3, the words "*Also reiterates* its call to countries" would be replaced by the words "*Encourages* countries";

(d) In operative paragraph 4, the words "*Calls upon* Member States to make voluntary contributions" would be replaced by the words "*Also encourages* Member States to make voluntary contributions";

(e) In operative paragraph 7, the words "*Invites* the Global Environment Facility to support" would be replaced by the words "*Notes with interest* the decision of the Global Environment Facility Council to support".

13. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the set of oral amendments without a vote.

14. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted the draft resolution, as amended, by a recorded vote of 111 to 1, with 42 abstentions (see para. 24, draft resolution I). The voting was as follows:[3]

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, France, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Syrian Arab Republic.

Abstaining:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

15. Statements in explanation of vote were made before the vote by the representatives of Kuwait, Italy, Israel, the Syrian Arab Republic, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

16. Statements in explanation of vote were made after the vote by the representatives of the Sudan, Mexico, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Canada, Pakistan and Algeria.

[3] The representative of Georgia subsequently indicated that had her delegation been present, it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

B. Draft resolutions A/C.2/60/L.35 and A/C.2/60/L.35/Rev.1

17. At the 31st meeting, on 16 November, the representative of Jamaica, on behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa" (A/C.2/60/L.35), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 59/235 of 22 December 2004 and other resolutions relating to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,

"*Reaffirming* the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'),

"*Recalling* its resolution 58/211 of 23 December 2003, in which it declared 2006 the International Year of Deserts and Desertification,

"*Recalling also* the development section of the 2005 World Summit outcome,

"*Reaffirming* the universal membership of the Convention, and acknowledging that desertification and drought are problems of a global dimension in that they affect all regions of the world,

"*Noting* that timely and effective implementation of the Convention would help to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

"*Emphasizing* the need for the provision of adequate resources for the focal area of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, of the Global Environment Facility,

"*Stressing* the need for further diversification of funding sources to address land degradation, in accordance with articles 20 and 21 of the Convention,

"*Expressing its deep appreciation and gratitude* to the Government of Kenya for hosting the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Nairobi from 17 to 28 October 2005,

"*Welcoming* the offer made by the Government of Spain to host the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, in autumn 2007,

"*Welcoming also* the offer made by the Government of Argentina to host the fifth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, in September 2006,

"*Welcoming further* the decision of the Government of Algeria to host a world summit dedicated to the protection of the deserts and combating desertification, in October 2006,

"1. *Takes note* of the note by the Secretary-General;

"2. *Stresses* the importance of the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, for meeting the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and in this regard calls upon the international community to support and strengthen the implementation of the Convention to address the causes of desertification and land degradation, as well as the poverty resulting from land degradation, through, inter alia, the mobilization of adequate and predictable financial resources, the transfer of technology and capacity-building at all levels;

"3. *Welcomes* the outcome of the third and fourth sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, particularly the invitation to donor countries, United Nations funds and programmes, the Bretton Woods institutions, and other development agencies to increase their assistance to the affected developing country parties by making more resources available to them;

"4. *Invites* the donor community to increase its support to the Convention with a view to bringing greater international attention to bear on the issue of land degradation and desertification, which will contribute to the improvement of the sustainable development of drylands and the global environment;

"5. *Stresses* the need for all parties to the Convention to demonstrate greater political commitment to the realization of its objectives;

"6. *Welcomes* the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its seventh session to conclude with the Council of the Global Environment Facility a memorandum of understanding on enhanced collaboration between the Convention and the Facility;

"7. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to strengthen the focal area of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, and calls upon Global Environment Facility donors to increase substantially the level of resources to be allocated to the land degradation focal area during the fourth replenishment of the Facility;

"8. *Urges* the Global Environment Facility, as a matter of high priority, to make financial resources available for capacity-building activities in affected developing country parties and to facilitate coordination between the Facility and Convention focal points at the country level;

"9. *Takes note with interest* of ongoing efforts to diversify the availability of financial resources to support activities aimed at combating desertification and poverty;

"10. *Calls upon* Governments, where appropriate, in collaboration with relevant multilateral organizations, including the Global Environment Facility implementation agencies, to integrate desertification into their plans and strategies for sustainable development;

"11. *Stresses* the importance of the implementation of the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its seventh session on the follow-up to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, commissioned by the Conference of the Parties in its decision 23/COP.6 of 5 September 2003, and the development of a strategy to foster the implementation of the Convention;

"12. *Takes note* of the decision taken by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh session on the programme and budget for the biennium 2006-2007, and expresses its deep concern about the financial situation of the Convention;

"13. *Reiterates* its appeal to all parties to pay promptly and in full their contributions to the core budget, which are due every year on 1 January, and urges all parties that have outstanding contributions to pay these, as soon as possible, in order to ensure continuity in the cash flow required to finance the ongoing work of the Conference of the Parties, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism;

"14. *Emphasizes* the need to provide the secretariat of the Convention with stable, adequate and predictable resources in order to enable it to continue to discharge its responsibilities in an efficient and timely manner;

"15. *Calls upon* Governments, and invites multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, regional economic integration organizations and all other interested organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to contribute generously to the General Fund, the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund, in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, and welcomes the financial support already provided by some countries;

"16. *Takes note* of the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and further encourages continuing cooperation in order to promote complementarities among the secretariats, while respecting their independent legal status;

"17. *Approves* the continuation of the current institutional linkage and related administrative arrangements between the secretariat of the Convention and that of the United Nations for a further five-year period, to be reviewed by both the General Assembly and the Conference of the Parties no later than 31 December 2011, as decided by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh session;

"18. *Decides* to include in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2006-2007 the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for the biennium;

"19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provision for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, including the eighth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties and the meetings of its

subsidiary bodies, in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007;

"20. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first session the sub-item entitled 'Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa';

"21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session on the implementation of the present resolution."

18. At its 37th meeting, on 15 December, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa" (A/C.2/60/L.35/Rev.1) submitted by the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.35.

19. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications (see A/C.2/60/SR.37).

20. Also at its 37th meeting, the Committee was informed that a recorded vote had been requested on operative paragraph 18 of draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.35/Rev.1.

21. At the same meeting, the Committee retained operative paragraph 18 by a recorded vote of 159 to 2, with 1 abstention. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Japan, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Israel.

22. Statements in explanation of vote were made before the vote by the representatives of the United States of America and Japan (see A/C.2/60/SR.37).

23. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.35/Rev.1 (see para. 24, draft resolution II).

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

24. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
International Year of Deserts and Desertification, 2006

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 58/211 of 23 December 2003, in which it declared 2006 the International Year of Deserts and Desertification,

Taking note of the decision of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, held in Nairobi from 17 to 28 October 2005, on the celebration of the 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification,[1]

Deeply concerned by the exacerbation of desertification in all regions of the world, particularly in Africa, and its far-reaching implications for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular on poverty eradication,

Deeply concerned also at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of agricultural land and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the uprooting of a vast number of fruit-bearing trees,

Conscious of the need to raise public awareness and to protect the biological diversity of deserts as well as indigenous and local communities and the traditional knowledge of those affected by this phenomenon,

Welcoming the decision of the Government of Algeria to convene and host an international conference with the participation of Heads of State and Government dedicated to the "Protection of deserts and combating desertification" in October 2006,

Welcoming also the decision of the Government of Israel to host, in cooperation with other stakeholders, an international conference entitled "Deserts and Desertification: Challenges and Opportunities" in Be'er Sheva, Israel, in November 2006,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of preparation of the International Year of Deserts and Desertification, 2006,[2]

1. *Welcomes* the nomination of United Nations honorary spokespersons for the International Year of Deserts and Desertification, and encourages the Secretary-General to nominate additional personalities in that respect so as to promote a successful celebration of the Year worldwide;

2. *Reiterates* its call to Member States and all relevant international organizations to support the activities related to desertification, including land

[1] See ICCD/COP(7)/13, paras. 4-7.
[2] A/60/169.

degradation, to be organized by affected countries, in particular African countries and the least developed countries;

3. *Encourages* countries to contribute, as they are able, to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and to undertake special initiatives in observance of the Year with the goal of enhancing the implementation of the Convention;

4. *Also encourages* Member States to make voluntary contributions to the Special Fund of the Convention in order to achieve the objectives of resolution 58/211 entitled "International Year of Deserts and Desertification 2006";

5. *Invites* Governments and all relevant stakeholders that have not yet done so to inform the secretariat for the Convention of activities envisaged for the observance of the Year;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to make available to the Parties to the Convention and to observers a consolidated list of all activities reported, including lessons learned and best practices, in order to coordinate information and avoid overlapping of activities;

7. *Notes with interest* the decision of the Global Environment Facility Council to support, within its mandate, activities undertaken by affected developing countries parties to the Convention in the framework of the Year;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the celebration of the Year.

Draft resolution II
Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 59/235 of 22 December 2004 and other resolutions relating to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[1]

Reaffirming the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[2]

Recalling its resolution 58/211 of 23 December 2003, in which it declared 2006 the International Year of Deserts and Desertification,

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit outcome,[3]

Reaffirming the universal membership of the Convention, and acknowledging that desertification and drought are problems of a global dimension in that they affect all regions of the world,

Noting that timely and effective implementation of the Convention would help to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and encouraging affected country parties to include, as appropriate, in their national development strategies measures to combat desertification,

Stressing the need for further diversification of funding sources to address land degradation, in accordance with articles 20 and 21 of the Convention,

Expressing its deep appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Kenya for hosting the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in Nairobi from 17 to 28 October 2005,

Welcoming the offer made by the Government of Spain to host the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in the autumn of 2007,

Welcoming also the offer made by the Government of Argentina to host the fifth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention in September 2006,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;[4]

2. *Resolves to support and strengthen* the implementation of the Convention to address causes of desertification and land degradation, as well as poverty

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[2] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[3] See resolution 60/1.

[4] A/60/171, sect. II.

resulting from land degradation, through, inter alia, the mobilization of adequate and predictable financial resources, the transfer of technology and capacity-building at all levels;

3. *Notes with interest* the decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its seventh session on the outcomes of the third and fourth sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;[5]

4. *Invites* the donor community to increase its support to the implementation of the Convention with a view to bringing greater international attention to bear on the issue of land degradation and desertification, which will contribute to the improvement of the sustainable development of drylands and the global environment;

5. *Welcomes* the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its seventh session to conclude with the Council of the Global Environment Facility and to adopt the memorandum of understanding on enhanced collaboration between the Convention and the Facility;[6]

6. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to strengthen the focal area of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation;

7. *Also invites* the Global Environment Facility to continue to make resources available for capacity-building activities in affected country parties implementing the Convention;

8. *Takes note with interest* of ongoing efforts to diversify the availability of financial resources to support activities aimed at combating desertification and poverty;

9. *Calls upon* Governments, where appropriate, in collaboration with relevant multilateral organizations, including the Global Environment Facility implementation agencies, to integrate desertification into their plans and strategies for sustainable development;

10. *Stresses* the importance of the implementation of all decisions of the Conference of the Parties, in particular the decisions at its seventh session on strengthening of the Committee on Science and Technology and on the follow-up to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit,[5] and supports the development of a ten-year strategy to foster the implementation of the Convention;

11. *Notes* steps taken by the Conference of the Parties at it seventh session to introduce the euro as the budget and accounting currency as from the biennium 2008-2009;[7]

12. *Recalls* the request of the Conference of the Parties at its seventh session that the Executive Secretary notify parties of their contributions for 2006 by 21 November 2005 and for 2007 by 1 October 2006 to encourage early payment,[7] and urges all parties that have not yet paid their contributions for 1999 and/or the biennium 2000-2001 and 2002-2003 to do so as soon as possible;

13. *Recognizes* the need to provide the secretariat of the Convention with stable, adequate and predictable resources in order to enable it to continue to

[5] See ICCD/COP(7)/16/Add.1.

[6] Ibid., decision 6/COP.7 and annex.

[7] Ibid., decision 23/COP.7.

discharge its responsibilities in an efficient and timely manner, and further recognizes the provision of section A on budget reform in the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its seventh session on the programme and budget for the biennium 2006-2007, including the request that the Executive Secretary take additional measures necessary to address those recommendations, ensure that the financial rules are fully respected in the future and report on this matter to the meeting of the Bureau and in the performance report for the biennium 2006-2007;[7]

14. *Calls upon* Governments, and invites multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, regional economic integration organizations and all other interested organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to contribute generously to the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund, in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties,[8] and welcomes the financial support already provided by some countries;

15. *Takes note* of the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[9] the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biological Diversity,[10] and further encourages continuing cooperation in order to promote complementarities among the secretariats, while respecting their independent legal status;

16. *Approves* the continuation of the current institutional linkage and related administrative arrangements between the Convention secretariat and the Secretariat of the United Nations for a further five-year period, to be reviewed by both the General Assembly and the Conference of the Parties by no later than 31 December 2011, as decided by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh session;[11]

17. *Decides* to include in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2006-2007 the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for the biennium;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provision for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, including the eighth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies, in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007;

19. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first session the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa";

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session on the implementation of the present resolution.

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[8] ICCD/COP(1)/11/Add.1 and Corr.1, decision 2/COP.1, annex, paras. 7-11.

[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[10] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.

[11] ICCD/COP(7)/16/Add.1, decision 26/COP.7.